



Jens Stoltenbergs tale ved Nordisk Råds Session

Taler

Jens Stoltenberg
NATO's generalsekretær

Dato

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Sted

Oslo, Norge

Thank you very much, Mr President.

Dear Jorodd,

Dear everyone, it is a pleasure to be here.

Back in the Nordic Council.

Back in the Parliament.

I am a strong supporter of Nordic cooperation.

Because it has produced concrete results in culture, the environment, transport and many other important areas.

But also because it has brought politicians from all over the Nordics closer together.

Formally and informally.

It has created friendship and trust between decision-makers across national borders and across party lines.

It is particularly important at a time when polarization, fragmentation and suspicion threaten trust in democracy, and the open societies we seek to build here in the north.

The only area where the Nordic Council has historically not played a role is in defence and security policy.

We didn't discuss that here because we had chosen different paths.

Now that has changed.

Soon we will all be members of the same defence alliance. The entire Nordic region in NATO. This is good, because we live in a more dangerous world.

The security policy break after the Cold War is over. With increasing great

power rivalry, war in Europe, and a new war in the Middle East. Where we see horrific human suffering.

Thousands of innocent people are affected.

We condemn Hamas' terrorist attacks against Israel. At the same time, it is important that Israel's response takes place within international law. That civilian lives are protected, and that humanitarian aid reaches Gaza.

NATO countries have called for humanitarian corridors and humanitarian pauses in hostilities.

It is important that this war does not escalate into a major regional conflict.

Iran, Hezbollah and other groups must not abuse the situation and escalate it further.

The suffering we have seen in recent weeks reminds us once again that we must not give up working for a lasting, political peace solution.

Unfortunately, we cannot choose to deal only with one crisis at a time. The war in Gaza must not lead to a weakening of our will and ability to support Ukraine. A new winter is approaching, and we must expect new attacks against energy supplies and other critical infrastructure.

There are no signs that Russia is planning for peace. On the contrary, they are planning for more war.

Therefore, we must continue to support Ukraine. That means more weapons. And I say that because I want peace in Ukraine.

President Putin can stop the war today. By ceasing to attack a neighbour.

Ukraine does not have that option.

If Ukraine stops defending itself, they will be occupied. And occupation is not peace.

We know that here in the Nordics.

Because here we say that the Second World War started on 9 April 1940, when Denmark and Norway were invaded.

We say that the war ended on 8 May 1945.

And we say that, even if the fighting only lasted a few days and weeks. The rest of the time we were occupied. But we never called it peace. The same applies to Ukraine.

That is why the Ukrainians are fighting. With courage and determination. But courage doesn't stop bombs. Determination does not intercept missiles. That's what weapons do. Of high quality - and in large quantities. Tanks, air defences, fighter planes and ammunition.

Our support makes a difference. Remember where we started. When Russia invaded Ukraine, we feared that Kyiv would fall in just a few days. It didn't happen. Instead, the Ukrainians have liberated their land. Reclaiming half of the land that Russian forces took when they invaded last year.

Ukraine has survived as a nation. Retained its freedom and independence. And they can still choose their own path. This is a big win.

Russia has lost. It has lost tens of thousands of soldiers. It has lost large amounts of military material. And it has lost political influence and is increasingly isolated.

The invasion of Ukraine is a strategic defeat for Russia.

The stronger Ukraine is on the battlefield, the stronger they will be at the negotiating table.

And when the war does end, we must ensure that history does not repeat itself. That Russia does not continue to take pieces of Ukraine.

All NATO countries agree that Ukraine should become a member of NATO.

At the summit in Vilnius, we took three important decisions to make it happen. First, we removed one of two steps in the membership process. We removed the requirement for the MAP, Membership Action Plan, and thus made the path much shorter.

Second, we created an entirely new political platform. We established the NATO-Ukraine Council. Where we meet as equals for consultations and can make decisions.

And third, we adopted a comprehensive package that ensures that Ukraine and NATO forces can fully interact.

Investing in Ukraine's security is also an investment in our security.

If Putin wins in Ukraine, it will be a tragedy for the Ukrainians. But it is also

dangerous for us. It will make us more vulnerable.

The message to Putin and other authoritarian leaders will be that if they use military force, they will get what they want.

In particular, China is following events closely. What happens in Europe today may happen in East Asia tomorrow.

China is not our enemy. And we must cooperate on everything from the climate crisis to arms control.

But the country is a growing challenge to our security. China is an authoritarian state that does not share our values. That cracks down on democracy and human rights.

They are modernising their military, with long-range missiles and advanced nuclear weapons. Expanding into the South China Sea. Threatening Taiwan.

We will still trade with China. But it must be done in ways that do not undermine our security.

We are vulnerable when:

70 percent of the batteries for electric cars.

80 percent of all solar panels.

Or when almost all imports into the EU of critical, rare minerals come from China.

By comparison, Russian gas accounted for 40 percent of the EU's gas imports before the invasion of Ukraine. It was enough for Russia to use energy as a weapon.

We must avoid the same mistake in our trade with China. It is not easy, but it is necessary.

In a more dangerous world, we have to invest more. In the transatlantic community, NATO. And in our defence.

We have all committed ourselves to spending at least two percent of gross domestic product on defence.

Two percent is not an arbitrary number.

NATO leaders have adopted new defence plans. With detailed requirements for weapon systems, forces and preparedness. To fulfil these plans, we must invest at least two percent.

And it is gratifying that all the Nordic countries have plans to achieve this goal.

During the Cold War, we spent significantly more on defence. For example, Norway spent almost three percent, as recently as the 1980s. So it is possible.

In NATO, we agree to defend each other. That an attack on one country is an attack on us all. One for all, all for one. There is no deeper solidarity.

But sometimes we all need to contribute more to become extra strong. In the long run, it is not possible for some to bear a significantly greater share of the burden than others. Deficiencies in one country's defence are deficiencies in our common defence. Increased defence spending means more defence. But it gives us one more thing. A stronger NATO community.

No one can say with certainty what the next crisis will be. What we can say with certainty, however, is that we are safer when we stand together. We represent fifty percent of the world's economic power, and fifty percent of the world's military power. This is why it is so important that we keep Europe and North America together. In NATO.

NATO is history's most successful defence alliance. Precisely because we have managed to stick together. Despite our differences. But also because we have changed when the world has changed. Since Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, and the march into Donbas in 2014, we have carried out the biggest restructuring of NATO since the end of the Cold War. We have increased preparedness. And for the first time we have combat-ready forces in the east of the alliance. We have established new defence domains, such as cyber. And the transition continues. With completely new defence plans. NATO's command structure is being rearranged. And we are stepping up cooperation with NATO's partners in the Indo-Pacific region.

Not only is NATO getting stronger. We're getting bigger. At the summit in Madrid last year, we invited Finland and Sweden into NATO. Two solid, new member states. With well-trained and well-equipped forces. A strong defence industry. Finnish and Swedish membership means that defence cooperation between the Nordic countries is deepened and strengthened. Because, for the first time, we all become part of common defence plans and a common command structure.

It strengthens our ability to defend the Nordic region. It strengthens our ability to be present in the northern regions. And it strengthens our ability to come to the aid of our Baltic neighbours.

Finland became a member in April, less than a year after applying for membership.

For Sweden, too, the process has gone quickly. A week ago, I visited Sweden's Prime Minister, Ulf Kristersson, in Stockholm.

The day before, President Erdogan had signed and sent over the ratification protocol for Swedish membership to the Turkish parliament.

This week it is with the foreign affairs committee. This is a follow-up to the agreement from Vilnius.

Sweden is stepping up cooperation in the fight against terrorism, and by facilitating increased trade in defence material with Turkey.

Now Turkey is following through on its part of the agreement.

Before the invasion of Ukraine last year, President Putin issued an ultimatum to NATO. He wanted us to close NATO's door to new member states. And that we should remove all our forces from NATO countries in the east of the alliance.

He wanted less NATO.

Now he gets more NATO.

More forces in the east, and more members. This is yet another confirmation that the invasion of Ukraine is a strategic defeat for Russia.

Dear friends,

It is a great pleasure to be back here. At the Storting [the Norwegian parliament]. In this building at Karl Johans gate 22. Oslo's main street and the country's most famous parade.

And if we look out of the windows at the back of the room, we look towards the castle and the statue of King Karl Johan, after whom this street is named.

He led the campaign against Norway in 1814. After Denmark had lost dominion over Norway. Perhaps he thought that it was something he was entitled to, after Sweden had lost Finland a few years earlier.

And so Karl Johan is a reminder of how the Nordic countries have fought against each other throughout history. But now we live in peace.

When I meet people from areas where conflicts appear impossible to overcome.

Where the enmity is so eternal, and the contempt is so strong. I tell them about the Nordic countries.

How once we were enemies. And now we are friends. With the Nordic Council as one of the finest expressions of that friendship.

Others can also become friends, stop fighting. And instead cooperate and live in peace.

Peace is always possible. That is my message to you today.

Thank you very much

Kilde

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Dokumentation på online medie

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